

Washington, DC – U.S. Congressman Mike Pence gave his farewell address on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives last night. Below are his remarks:

"Mr. Speaker, it's an honor to rise for what will be my last time speaking as a Member of the United States House of Representatives. The people of Indiana have given me a new assignment.

"But I rise tonight to pay a debt of gratitude to all of those who gave me the privilege to serve in this place.

"As a boy, I dreamed of someday representing my hometown in our nation's capital. Twelve years ago, the people of the Sixth Congressional District made that dream a reality. And so I begin tonight by simply saying 'thank you' to all of them for letting me live that dream in these past 12 years, to come to this place again and again, and to be some small part of the story of this institution and America's story.

"My only ambition in Congress was to look out for my family and to keep my word to the people who sent me here. To let my 'yes' be 'yes' and my 'no' be 'no.' And it is my hope that as people view the totality of my record and my life, they'll see that we've done just that.

"There are those to thank tonight that made that possible, and that's what brings me to this task this evening.

"First, permit me to give thanks to God, whose grace and mercy has sustained us every day that we have served the people of Indiana in this place.

"Next, and on this earth most of all, I rise to honor and thank my beloved wife, Karen Pence, whose love, whose support, whose sacrifice, patience, and kindness, have made all that I have done in the service to the people of Indiana in this place, possible. Thanks for believing in me. I love you and I'll see you home.

"To our children: Michael, Charlotte, and Audrey. They were 6, 7, and 8 when I first arrived in this place and stood on this floor with my right hand raised, 12 years ago. They are now 18, 19, and 21. Thank you for your love. But thank you for the sacrifices that you have made so that we could live our dreams. Now go make your dreams come true. I know every one of you can.

"To my colleagues with whom I've stood at this place, shoulder to shoulder, doing freedom's work, standing each and every day, cheerfully on behalf of the founding principles of this nation: standing for a strong national defense; for limited government; for economic freedom; and for the moral foundations of this nation. You know who you are. And we will take you from this place in our hearts always.

"You know there's a saying back home, when you see a turtle on a fence post, one thing you know for sure is that he didn't get there on his own.

"So lastly what I want to do tonight, Mr. Speaker, is really to pay a debt of gratitude to the best Congressional Staff in American history. The men and women who have served our efforts in this city, and at home in Indiana for the past 12 years. I leave this body truly humbled when I look back at the caliber of the staff that we've been able to call to this mission, servant leaders all. They are men and women who approached each and every day with a servant leader's heart and made sacrifices over the years in order to serve the people of Indiana with integrity and energy. Names like Bill Smith and Lani Czarniecki, Jennifer Pavlik and Josh Pitcock, Matt Lloyd and Paul Teller, Marc Short, Brian Neale and Ryan Jarmula, just to name a few. You know, I don't really have time tonight to name all of the men and women who served us in various capacities over these last 12 years. But I would ask unanimous consent to submit each and every one of their names to the Congressional Record this night.

"Before I yield the floor for the last time, let me close simply by speaking a word of confidence and one more word of gratitude.

"Some people look on in Washington, D.C., and they are rightly frustrated. Some people can come to this nation's capital and lose their idealism. I'm not such a person. When I walk out of this Capitol for the last time, I will leave here with my idealism intact. I will continue to believe as our founders did, that we are one nation under God, rich with a purpose yet to be fulfilled. That no matter how dark the day may seem that we can be confident when we stand for freedom and we do freedom's work, because freedom is not just our story, it's His story. And when we stand for freedom, however imperfectly, we make His work on this earth our own.

"In the words of the poet I depart this place saying,

'The woods are lovely, dark, and deep.
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.'

"I say to my colleagues and friends and neighbors in Indiana, my duties take me elsewhere, but wherever providence leads this nation, let us ever remember that we have promises to keep for future generations of Americans in preserving, protecting, and defending the blessings of liberty for ourselves and our posterity. And I know we'll keep that promise because we're Americans.

"Thank you for the honor of addressing you tonight. And to the people of the Sixth Congressional District: know that I'll always be grateful for the privilege that you have given me to serve in this place. And I will always cherish my days in the people's house.

"May God bless the United States House of Representatives, and all who serve her now, and ever on this floor. And may God bless the United States of America."

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